TREASURY DEPARTMENT
Washington

33

REMARKS BY MISS EVA ADAMS
DIRECTOR OF THE MINT
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1964
11:00 A.M.

After President Kennedy's tragic death, thousands of Americans wrote to President Johnson, to the Secretary of the Treasury, and to the Director of the Mint, recommending that the portrait of John F. Kennedy be placed on a United States coin. President Johnson subsequently asked Congress for legislation authorizing the Treasury Department to mint new fifty-cent pieces with the likeness of the late President. Congress gave its approval and President Johnson signed the bill on December 30, 1963.

Today, we strike the first of the John Fitzgerald Kennedy half-dollars to be used for general circulation purposes. Thus, the late President joins the list of his illustrious predecessors whose portraits appear on our coins for regular use -- Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt.

No higher honor could come to me than this opportunity to preside over the first striking of the John Fitzgerald Kennedy half-dollar, for I know that in history he will take his place with the other great presidents who appear on our coins.

With me in Philadelphia are Mr. Robert W. Wallace, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Michael Sura, Superintendent of the Philadelphia Mint, and Mr. Gilroy Roberts, Chief Sculptor of the Mint, and Mr. Frank Gasparro, his Assistant. Mr. Roberts and Mr. Gasparro designed the new half-dollar.

Standing by at the Denver Mint we are honored to have the Honorable Byron G. Rogers, Congressman from the first district of Colorado, Mr. Frederick W. Tate, Assistant Director of the Mint, and Mrs. Fern Miller, the Superintendent there.

Now we are ready to strike the first coins and I would like to ask Secretary Wallace and Congressman Rogers to start the stamping presses on my signal.

Are you ready gentlemen? ----- Please press the button and start the presses.

- - - - - -

The first coins struck in Philadelphia and Denver will be sent to the White House, and President Johnson will present them to Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy and to Caroline and John Kennedy.

During 1964 the Mint will produce 90,000,000 of the Kennedy half-dollars. When 26,000,000 of that number have been made, they will be distributed to banks throughout the country and released to the public at face value in late March or early April. Thereafter, the new coins will be placed in circulation on a continuous basis as they are produced at the Mints. By the end of the year, almost all of the 90,000,000 will be in circulation.

Congressman Rogers, I want to thank you for being present at the Denver Mint and for participating in the ceremony today. I am also grateful to Mrs. Miller and Mr. Tate for their assistance.

Mr. Wallace, as the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury who has general supervision over the Mint we appreciate your coming to Philadelphia for this occasion. And my thanks to Superintendent Sura and Mr. Roberts and Mr. Gasparro.

Goodbye from Philadelphia.

oOo